

Message Text

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10

ACTION AF-08

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 DHA-02 IO-13 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-02

INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-02 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15

USIA-15 COME-00 EB-07 LAB-04 SIL-01 EUR-12 /104 W

----- 130895

R 030500Z JUL 76

FM AMCONSUL JOHANNESBURG

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 4852

INFO AVONSUL CAPE TOWN 1869

AMCONSUL DURBAN

AMEMBASSY PRETORIA

UNCLAS JOHANNESBURG 1091

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: ELAB, SF

SUBJECT: HEAD OF TRADE UNION CONFEDERATION COMMENTS ON SOWETO RIOTS

1. IN AN INTERVIEW WITH LOCAL LABOR LEADER, ARTHUR GROBBELAAR,

HEAD OF TRADE UNION COUNCIL OF SOUTH AFRICA (TUCSA), WHO HAS JUST RETURNED TO JOHANNESBURG FROM ILO MEETINGS IN GENEVA, SAID HE FELT THE "UN-EXPECTEDLY MILD" RESPONSE AMONG WESTERN NATIONS THAT RIOTS IN SOWETO WERE A RESULT OF A WIDE AND DEEP CHANGE IN WESTERN ATTITUDES TOWARD SOUTH AFRICA.

HE SAID HE HAD SPOKEN TO MANY INFLUENTIAL WESTERN TRADE UNIONISTS DURING HIS TRIP AND FOUND THAT "MOST OF THE HEAT HAS GONE OUT OF THE HATE CAMPAIGN PREVIOUSLY WAGED AGAINST SOUTH AFRICA".

2. GROBBELAAR COMPARED WESTERN REACTION TO SOWETO WITH REACTION TO SHARPEVILLE SHOOTINGS IN 1960 AND FOUND IT BORE NO RESEMBLANCE TO THAT OUTBURST. HE FOUND A "DISILLUSIONMENT WITH THE THIRD WORLD AND PARTICULARLY WITH AFRICAN STATES" AND BELIEVES THAT PRIME MINISTER VORSTER'S DETENTE EFFORTS HAD PLAYED AN IMPORTANT ROLE IN THIS CHANGE IN ATTITUDE ALSO.

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3. ON THE OTHER HAND, GROBBELAAR WARNED SOUTH AFRICANS THAT THE WEST STILL FELT STRONGLY ABOUT THE NEED FOR BLACK POLITICAL RIGHTS AND SAID "THE WEST WILL NOT PUT UP WITH OBVIOUS INJUSTICES IN SOUTH AFRICA AND WILL CONTINUE TO DEMAND THE REMOVAL OF DISCRIMINATORY PRACTICES TO WHICH THE GOVERNMENT HAS COMMITTER SELF." JOHNSON

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